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ABSTRACT

Nine national education associations were surveyed about inservice training needs assessment and types of training to assist in the implementation of P.L. 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. Each association's inservice programs and needs are summarized: the American Association of School Administration, American Federation of Teachers, National Association of Elementary School Principals, National Association of State Boards of Education, National Education Association, National School Boards Association, National Association of State Directors of Special Education, and the Council for Exceptional Children. A concluding summary indicates four needs assessment techniques: analysis of existing records, use of surveys, collection of others' opinions, and observation and intervention. Among training needs reported were development of individualized educational programs, requirements of the law, and instructional techniques for working with children in the least restrictive environment. Publications related to P.L. 94-142, inservice workshops, and audiovisual materials were the most frequently mentioned type of inservice training assistance provided to association members. (CL)

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P. L. 94-142 Needs Assessment and Inservice Training Activities of National Education Associations

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Early in 1978 The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) invited selected national education associations to become members of an informal consortium to focus on issues related to the inservice training of personnel who provide education of handicapped children. Eight associations* accepted the invitation and have been meeting with CEC on a regular basis to share information about inservice training activities and resources and to discuss problems and concerns related to training personnel to implement P. L. 94-142.

One of the consortium activities has been a survey by CEC of each member association to obtain information about inservice training needs assessment activities, the training needs identified, and the kinds of training being provided to members to assist with the implementation of P. L. 94-142. The information gathered through this survey is one component of the needs assessment activities of CEC's Needs Assessment Project funded by the Office of Special Education, U. S. Department of Education.

In the Fall of 1979, consortium representatives were asked to respond to three questions related to inservice training activities of their associations.

1. How do you determine the inservice training needs of your association's members?

2. What are the inservice training needs of your members?

3. What kinds of inservice training have you provided to assist members with the implementation of P. L. 94-142?

This paper presents a description of the information gathered from each association. The responses of the nine associations are also summarized to provide an overview of consortium inservice needs assessment and training activities.

American Association of School Administrators (AASA)

The members of the American Association of School Administrators are surveyed annually by questionnaire to identify their concerns about various education issues. The results of the survey are used to identify topics for programs for the convention, regional drive-in conferences, and the National Academy for School Executives.

The latest survey, AASA Federal Issues Identification Survey 1980, reveals that "compliance and funding for handicapped regulations" rank third in importance out of about 20 topics. AASA members are also concerned with "administrators' training," ranking it tenth.

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* Participants in the consortium are listed at the end of this paper.

Project TEAMS (Team Management Decision Making for Educators and Administrators to Meet Special Education Mandates) addresses these two needs. The TEAMS project is designed to provide training to administrators, teachers, school board members, central office personnel, and parents to assist them to be effective team managers for the successful implementation of P. L. 94-142 and Section 504. The American Association of School Administrators, the National Association of Elementary School Principals and the National Association of State Directors of Special Education have collaborated on this project which has developed a Project TEAMS trainer's manual, participant's workbook, 4 cassettes, 4 filmstrips, and a set of slides that covers full services planning. Initial training, consisting of two intensive workshops and on-site follow-up assistance, was conducted in four states during the first project year by AASA and NAESP. The second phase of the training involved all states in four regional workshops conducted by the three cooperating organizations.

The trainer's kit described above is available through AASA. It is titled Project TEAMS: Planning for Full Services, Anthony Caetano and Richard Punzo, editors. Besides Project TEAMS materials, AASA has two other publications which address education of handicapped individuals:

- Special Education in Transition by Don R. Barbacovi and Richard W. Clelland. The purpose of this handbook is to examine the statutory and regulatory requirements of P. L. 94-142 and to delineate the various dimensions of local educational agency administrative responsibilities relative to the successful implementation of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act.

- Civil Rights for the Handicapped by Richard Clelland. The purpose of this handbook is to examine the statutory and regulatory requirements of Section 504 and to delineate the various dimensions of local educational agency administrative responsibilities relative to the successful implementation of various Section 504 subparts.

American Federation of Teachers (AFT)

The American Federation of Teachers determines the inservice training needs of their members by taking into consideration the phone calls and questions they get when traveling in the field that are related to P. L. 94-142. They also note the concerns and problems of teachers in implementing P. L. 94-142 and the requests from the field for workshops. The questions asked most often are related to IEPs (how to cut down on paperwork which may infringe on teaching time) and least restrictive environment (both special education and regular education teachers need inservice training on instructional techniques, etc.) Presently, AFT is in the process of developing a report on the problems of implementing P. L. 94-142. It also operates the AFT Teachers' Network for Education of the Handicapped which provides inservice to regular education teachers and identifies and produces related resource materials.

On the basis of the reported needs, AFT sets up workshops designed to explain the law and provide help to teachers in implementing the law. In addition, three publications developed by AFT explain P. L. 94-142 for teachers and discuss issues related to it. A fourth publication is designed to assist Teacher Centers in providing inservice training to regular education teachers. Each of these publications is described below:

- A Guide to Understanding the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (P. L. 94-142), by Marilyn Rauth. In a question and answer format, this booklet explains the requirements of P. L. 94-142 and its regulations which govern the education of handicapped children. It will assist each regular and special education teacher to be aware of their responsibilities under this law.

- Preserving Both Children's and Teachers' Rights under the Education for All Handicapped Act (P.L. 94-142), by Marilyn Rauth. An overview of teachers' common concerns about implementation of P. L. 94-142 which includes a discussion of improper procedures which threaten the quality of education and steps teachers can take to eliminate these problems.

- Mainstreaming: A River to Nowhere or a Promising Current? by Marilyn Rauth, Director of the Educational Issues Department. The public schools are facing a new integration issue -- the placing of children with special problems or handicaps into the same classroom with "normal" youngsters. This pamphlet examines some of the potential promises and problems of these mainstreaming programs.

- Making Regular Education Special: Inservice Training for Regular Classroom Teachers Working with Special Needs Children. A manual for Teacher Center staff and other inservice providers that includes sections on needs assessment, workshop activities, funding for inservice, and suggestions for workshops for parents.

Currently under development at AFT is a series of six pamphlets for regular education teachers that give practical information on working with children with specific handicaps in the regular classroom. The handicaps addressed are learning disabilities, mental retardation, emotional disturbance, physical handicaps, hearing impairment, and visual impairment. These "how-to" pamphlets will cover:

1. overview of disability,

2. preparing the children and teacher to accept the disability,

3. strengths the handicapped child develops to compensate for the disability and how to utilize the strengths of that child in the classroom,

4. observations for referral, and

5. resource organizations for help and referral.

National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP)

The National Association of Elementary School Principals identifies inservice training needs by soliciting input from various committees and from state executives at leadership conferences. The Ad Hoc Committee on Concerns Related to Education of the Handicapped, which was in existence for one year, was instrumental in assessing elementary principals' needs. They surveyed principals by questionnaire about their concerns related to education of handicapped children and recommended that NAESP establish a standing committee to develop plans to increase the skills and competencies of elementary school principals in the administration, organization, and provision of educational services to exceptional children.

Through these various sources, the following needs for inservice training of elementary school principals have been identified:

- Need for principals to be supportive of the development of least restrictive environment instructional programs for all students but especially for handicapped students.

- Need for principals to form collaborative relationships with support services through the sharing of knowledge and experiences (regular and special education), so that these relationships can be evidenced in the schools.

- Need for principals to have knowledge with regard to educational alternatives and current information systems including legislation, so that they can more effectively participate or give input into program issues.

- Need for principals to actively participate in the mechanics of setting up programs focusing on educational alternatives for nonhandicapped students who will be educated primarily in regular classrooms.

- Need for principals to take on the roles of advocates for the rights of handicapped children to participate in programs stressing normalization.

- Need for principals to participate in the implementation of field based activities related to instructional alternatives for students exhibiting learning and behavior problems.

- Need for principals to participate in community related activities concerning human service delivery systems for students who fail in school.

To meet principals' needs, the Ad Hoc Committee on Concerns Related to the Handicapped was to begin production of a booklet and audio-visual materials related directly to the principal and his or her responsibilities for P. L. 94-142. Actual training has been conducted by some state affiliates. Conference programs also address P. L. 94-142 concerns. Project TEAMS, conducted jointly with AASA the first year, and AASA and NASDSE the second year, is a major effort to train elementary school principals to become effective team members in implementing P. L. 94-142.

The most recent development concerning inservice training at NAESP is the establishment of the Committee on Professional Development. This committee, which held its first meeting in February 1980, is charged specifically with addressing inservice education issues.

The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP)

The National Association of Secondary School Principals determines the needs of the organization in a variety of ways. The association has sixteen standing and special committees. The Board of Directors and staff solicit information regarding the inservice needs from the membership.

In recent years, programs relating to P. L. 94-142 and the gifted have been included in the annual convention program. The NASSP sponsored a three day workshop in Chicago in November 1979 titled "Using Student Learning Styles in Planning P. L. 94-142."

Periodically the Bulletin (NASSP's monthly journal) publishes articles dealing with special education. The March 1976 issue was devoted to "The Gifted Learner." Since 1976 a total of 22 articles highlighting special education have been published in the Bulletin.

A filmstrip package titled "Implementing the I.E.P." has been completed. The filmstrip shows how to meet the requirements of P. L. 94-142 by implementing an individualized education program.

A National Directory of Professors of Secondary School Administration with expertise in special education has been published.

National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE)

Needs assessment for the National Association of State Boards of Education technical assistance or training projects is always done on-site through interviews which may be guided by a structured or open-ended written format. Three basic questions are always addressed: (1) What is your group/agency doing in this area? (What triggered action? Problems in getting started? Strengths? Plans for next year?) (2) What problems do you forsee? (What

needs to be done?) (3) What role should the state leadership play in solving problems?

Through the interview format, current issues and specific problems are identified for each state. An assessment identifies what needs to happen, what the political atmosphere is, and what are realistic recommendations to the state board. A second part of the needs assessment identifies the format for training desired by the state board. Through needs assessment interviews, NASBE has identified several general issues of concern to most states:

1. What is mainstreaming? (How did it come about? How are educators responding?)

2. Issues related to regular education/special education dichotomy.

3. General lack of support in state for professional development.

4. Problems in changing personnel preparation systems to respond to impact of federal and state mandates in education.

The training for state boards consists of providing them with information about state needs, issues, etc. and what are some options for actions that the board could take for the greatest impact, given the constraints that exist. This training (technical assistance) is arranged by NASBE and may involve state education department personnel, NASBE staff, and others from the state.

In addition to these training activities, the project "Comprehensive Personnel Development for Handicapped Children" will develop a series of monographs on personnel preparation for P. L. 94-142. The three main divisions will be as follows:

1. Mainstreaming and its impact on regular educators

2. The new needs created in personnel preparation

3. State leadership in meeting personnel preparation needs

National Education Association (NEA)

The National Education Association determines inservice training needs in several ways. They survey members with a national and local needs assessment instrument that includes questions related to P. L. 94-142. They have interviewed members about problems related to implementing P. L. 94-142 and have developed a tape that includes responses of a special education teacher, administrator, regular education teacher, and counselor. A national committee has been convened to examine inservice training needs. Concerns and problems of constituents are identified from calls to headquarters, questions to staff members who travel in the field and from meetings of the executive board.

As a result of identifying training needs through these various means, NEA reports six training needs in their filmstrip, The Handicapped, the Teachers, and the Law. Inservice programs should train teachers:

1. to recognize and assess special problems of students;
2. to help prepare IEPs;
3. to participate in IEP meetings;
4. to know the various methods required to work with special problem students in order to integrate them effectively into a regular classroom instruction;
5. to become familiar with the use of resources and materials available for working with handicapped students;
6. to develop and convey to other students an appropriate sensitivity to the needs and desires of handicapped students.

To assist their members with the implementation of P. L. 94-142, NEA has provided the following types of inservice training:

1. A model one-day workshop training program for local and state NEA staff, who in turn, conduct local inservice programs
2. A national conference workshop which includes training for state leaders on P. L. 94-142:
   a. briefing session on P. L. 94-142 by BEH staff (1/2 day)
   b. background information sessions (5 hours)
   c. regular planning sessions (3-4 hours)
3. Six regional conferences planned as followup to the national conference with a major component on P. L. 94-142
4. State association conferences which have had a day addressed to P. L. 94-142

Various publications and filmstrips have also been developed to provide information to members. These include:

- P. L. 94-142: How it Affects Teachers (1978). A cassette tape program that includes discussions by regular classroom teachers, a school counselor, and special educators about the implementation of P. L. 94-142. The program is divided into these four general categories:
  1. Preparation of the IEP
  2. The Least Restrictive Environment

3. In-Service Training Needs

4. Implementation of the IEP

- P. L. 94-142 Reaches the Classroom, Lana Pipes, editor, ERIC Clearinghouse on Teacher Education, Washington, DC, 1978. Report of a panel discussion by regular education and special education teachers on the results of early efforts in implementation of P. L. 94-142.

- Teachers and the Education of All Handicapped Students. A filmstrip and accompanying tape that introduces teachers to P. L. 94-142. The information package includes explanatory comments, notes, and excerpts from the Act to accompany the script.

- A Teacher's Reference Guide to P. L. 94-142 (1978). The guide cites and discusses the major provisions of P. L. 94-142, describing how local and state educational agencies are to provide a free appropriate public education for handicapped students and how teachers, their associations, and parents are to be involved. Section 504 is also cited where pertinent to the topic.

- The Handicapped, the Teachers, and the Law (1978). A filmstrip and accompanying tape designed to be used to understand P. L. 94-142, what has happened to teachers as a result of this law, and what more needs to be done to see that the law is properly implemented in the classroom.

- Teachers Can Change Teacher Education (1976). A booklet that provides background information about accreditation and certification and action teachers can take to change teacher education.

National School Boards Association (NSBA)

The National School Boards Association uses surveys extensively to assess the training needs of their members who are lay people who are not employed in education. The annual convention clinic programs are based on needs of the members. Additional information on needs is gathered when members are asked to select and rank clinic sessions they wish to attend. For the 1980 convention, attendees could choose six out of 102 clinics offered.

In 1977-78 a 30 member national task force examined issues related to education of handicapped children and identified training needs of school board members as follows:

- become aware of the requirements of, and their responsibility for, implementing P. L. 94-142 (and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973).

- know how to deal with parents and taxpayers and teachers to enhance effectiveness of the law.
- know how to support parent training in IEP process and due process procedures.
- become aware of kinds of efforts (including demonstration programs) that are being made across the United States.
- become aware of services being provided by state departments of education.
- become aware of collective bargaining issues in special education.

Inservice to school board members is provided through the annual convention and state association meetings, both of which provide clinic sessions on topics of concern for school board members. In addition, journals are published that carry articles related to implementation of P. L. 94-142: The American School Board Journal, aimed toward school board members, and The Executive Educator, directed toward school administrators.

National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE)

The National Association of State Directors of Special Education assesses the training needs of its members in several ways. One is to consider needs directly related to P. L. 94-142. If there are interpretations of the law that are variations of past practice or are new, training would be developed to inform members. Other ways include analyzing informal requests from the field, using interest surveys, identifying needs at meetings of the Executive Board or at meetings of "big 6" states, and, determining training needs from problem areas identified by the Office of Special Education. The areas of need in which training is most often requested are related to IEP, hearing officer training, and monitoring (states') systems.

Inservice training takes several forms at NASDSE and changes each year to keep up with the demands of the field. Technical assistance has been provided in almost every area of P. L. 94-142 (23 topic areas). The major training activities include:

1. Administrator Exchange Program - NASDSE sponsors sending an expert from one state educational agency to another needing help in a particular area of expertise (35 in past 2 years).
2. Liaison Bulletin - newsletter sent out approximately 26 times a year.

3. Periodic conferences, seminars, meetings - including national conference and cosponsoring with other agencies such as the Regional Resource Centers - 140 have been held in past 20 months, involving approximately 8000 persons.

4. Cooperation with other national associations to co-sponsor conferences, presentations.

5. Technical assistance to early childhood education projects at state agencies through Technical Assistance Development System (TADS) and Western States Technical Assistance Resource (WESTAR)

6. Development of resource publications (40 in last 20 months), four of the newest are:

- Q & A 94-142 & 504 - Answering Your Questions About P. L. 94-142 and Section 504 - A resource handbook.

- Toward a Comprehensive System of Inservice Training in Special Education - A monograph.

- Maximizing Staff Potential: An Individualized Approach to Personnel Development - A step-by-step resource manual.

- Direction Service: From Concept to Reality - Matching the needs of handicapped children and their families with community resources.

The Council for Exceptional Children

The Council for Exceptional Children has relied heavily on contact with specific individuals in the field to determine training needs that should be addressed. One formal method of doing this has been through the telephone "grapevining" technique. Leaders in the field are interviewed to identify current issues and needs, and they also name other individuals who should be interviewed. More recently, data from review of the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) of states Annual Program Plans and other data collected through the Needs Assessment Project have been used to identify training needs. A survey of officers of chapters, branches, federations, and divisions also identified specific topics (teacher burnout, parent-professional partnership, classroom behavior management, the special educator's role as consultant to the regular educator)to be developed for chapter programs. Future needs assessment plans include a more extensive survey of unit officers (federations, divisions), the review of a sample of local educational agency plans, the review of state educational agency plans, and contact with the Office of Special Education and other appropriate organizations.

Over the past four years training has consisted primarily of the presentation of two-day institutes. Over 54 institutes were developed in connection with four topical conferences (delivery of services, early childhood education, individualized education program planning, and career education for exceptional individuals). Selected institutes were then offered at regional sites and on a negotiated basis. In the Fall of 1979, the inventory of institutes was reduced to 15.

The institute program is currently being evaluated to consider its future direction. Possibly new or revised institutes will be developed to address needs in the area of diagnosis/assessment, IEPs and placement, consultation skills for the special educator, and futures of special education. Needs assessment will be conducted to identify specific needs in these and other areas.

In addition to the development of formal training institutes, CEC meets inservice training needs through the annual convention, topical conferences, newsletters, journal articles, publications, audio-visual materials, and the development of specialized training materials. Plans have been made for a national institute series and topical conference on seriously emotionally disturbed in August, 1980 in Minneapolis and twin conferences on the exceptional black child and exceptional bilingual child in February 1981 in New Orleans.

Summary

The information gathered from these nine associations is aggregated in the final section of this paper to provide an overview of how national education associations respond to the need to assist their members with the implementation of P. L. 94-142.

Summary of Needs Assessment Techniques

A tabulation of the needs assessment strategies being employed by these nine associations results in the following categorization of techniques: (The number of associations using each technique is contained in the parentheses.)

1. Analysis of existing records

   - Analyze states' Annual Program Plans (1)

2. Use of surveys

   - Survey members with a needs assessment questionnaire (6)
   - Formally interview members about problems related to implementing P. L. 94-142 and needs for training (3)

3. Collection of opinions of others

- Base decisions on inservice training needs on what knowledgeable headquarter's staff believe association's members need to know (1)
- Convene a task force or committee to examine inservice training needs (4)
- Identify needs from problem areas reported at meetings of the association's executive board (4)
- Identify needs from problem areas reported by OSE (1)

4. Observation and interaction

- Note concerns and problems of constituents in implementing P. L. 94-142 as identified through calls to headquarters and questions to staff members who travel in the field (5)

The analysis of existing records to determine training needs receives little use by these national associations. They are more oriented toward contact and interaction with their members. Six associations use a questionnaire to reach their members, and three mentioned conducting interviews to determine needs. Five of the associations reported that they note concerns and problems of their constituents in implementing P. L. 94-142. These are identified through calls to headquarters and questions asked of staff members who travel in the field. Needs assessment data is also gathered from meetings of the executive boards. Several associations mentioned establishing a task force or committee to identify training needs.

It appears that the needs assessment techniques used by a particular association are apt to be selected for their responsiveness to the desires of members. An association which reports that their members are overwhelmed with paper work may not choose to send out a questionnaire. An association with an executive board that is strongly interested in the training needs of members will use this body as a source of information on needs.

Summary of Training Needs

The information on training needs is summarized to provide a composite view of needs reported by national education associations. Since these associations represent a variety of constituencies, many of the areas of need identified by a particular association are representative of its membership and were not mentioned by other associations. However, there are some training areas that were common to several associations. The following list of inservice training needs includes those mentioned by two or more associations: (The number mentioning each topic is in parentheses.)

- Development of IEPs (5)
- Requirements of the law (4)

- Instructional techniques for working with children in the least restrictive environment (3)
- Development of collaborative relationships of regular and special education and support services (3)
- Interagency cooperation and community involvement in the education of handicapped students (3)
- Development of least restrictive environment instructional programs (2)
- Involvement of parents in IEP meetings and education of their handicapped child (2)
- Classroom behavior management (2)

This type of survey tends to result in the identification of broad areas of training need. Prior to the development of ways to meet the needs, these associations identify specific needs of their particular constituencies within the broad areas.

Summary of Types of Inservice Training Assistance Provided to Members of Associations

A variety of activities are included within the inservice training provided by the national associations. They range from journal articles to special institutes and conventions. The following list is a summary of the ways these nine associations assist their members with the implementation of P. L. 94-142: (The number mentioning each type of activity is in parentheses.)

- Development of publications related to P. L. 94-142 (8)
- Presentation of one to three day inservice workshops (6)
- Preparation of audio-visual materials that address identified training needs (6)
- Provision of on-site technical assistance (5)
- Sponsorship of special conferences, seminars, and meetings (5)
- Publication of newsletters and articles within existing journals (4)
- Development of trainers' kits for inservice topics (5)
- Presentation of programs related to P. L. 94-142 at annual conventions (4)
- Sponsorship of administrator exchange program (1)

There is considerable overlap in the ways associations attempt to meet the inservice training needs of their members. Nearly all associations have developed publications related to P. L. 94-142. At least two-thirds have prepared audio-visual materials to use for inservice training and have presented training workshops. Over half the associations have provided on-site technical assistance and have sponsored special conferences, etc.

The number of types of inservice training reported ranged from two to eight for each association with a median of five. It is evident that national associations have been actively providing for the training needs of their members in a variety of ways.

Conclusion

One of the major concerns following enactment of The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, Public Law 94-142, has been how to meet the training needs of educators who are responsible for carrying out the Act. National education associations have been extremely interested in assuring that their constituencies are appropriately prepared to work with handicapped children in the least restrictive environment. This survey provides evidence that many associations are actively involved in assessing training needs and have provided a variety of types of inservice training to meet identified needs.

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